

Resource A

Observations of your Sunday Experience

To be used by: Parish Implementation Teams, Parish Staff

Purpose: Observations of all areas of Sunday can help you begin to identify what you are doing well On Sunday, as well as what things you may want to focus on improving. This tool should also help you learn, what things you should be looking at/ considering each Sunday.

How to use: We would recommend you give this to several people at each Mass as an ‘observer’. You could also, additionally use as an Implementation team or staff. Discuss common things observed.

DIRECTIONS:

In an effort to make parishioner’s experience of Sunday the best it can possibly be, we would like to get your feedback and observations.

Please take time to review the following checklist, then, attend Sunday Mass as you normally would, however, from the time you enter and leave the Church parking lot, be particularly observant of your experience. Look at everything as if it was the first time you were stepping foot onto the campus of your parish. Look at everything as if you were not familiar with the Catholic Church or this particular parish. After Mass, take some time to check off all that apply.

ARRIVING AT THE PARISH

Facilities and parish grounds

- There was ample parking.
- Directional signs helped me park and know where to enter for Mass.
- If you had a special physical need, it was easy to park and access the Church.
- There was handicapped accessibility throughout the facility.
- The church and grounds were clean and well maintained.
- The church grounds were inviting and well landscaped
- I could easily and clearly hear the priest, readers, and music.
- I could easily and clearly **see** the various ministers and the liturgical actions.
- Restrooms were clearly marked
- Restrooms were clean, supplied and easily to use by families, the handicapped, etc.
- The lectors, priest, and musicians were easy to hear and sound was at a comfortable level.
- The temperature of the church was comfortable.

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Hospitality

- Overall, I felt welcomed by the parish community.
- I was greeted by someone when I arrived, in a genuine manner.
- I felt ‘seen’ and noticed by others as I walked into the Church.
- ⊖ Parish information was readily available.
- Volunteers were identifiable in some way (nametags, etc).
- Worshippers were willing to move into the pews to allow others to enter.
- There was a place for children/families to go if they wished (i.e., “cry room”).
- After mass the priest was available to greet and/or converse with parishioners.

Environment

- The entrance of the Church felt inviting.
- The interior of the church conveyed a prayerful atmosphere.
- The art and architecture in the church expressed noble simplicity, beauty and fostered prayerful devotion.
- The general tone of the community was one of joy, happiness and anticipation of something great.

THE PEOPLE

The Congregation

- People arrived **punctually** and **remained** for the entirety of the Mass.
- People were generally **reverential** throughout the Mass.
- A majority of worshippers participated in the acclamations (singing) and the responses.
- The congregation was **united** in their gestures and postures.
- It was made easy for someone new to the Mass to know what was happening and how to follow along. (worship aid, prompt or explanation from the priest, etc)

The Clergy

- The clergy (bishops, priests, deacons) seemed approachable and caring towards the people.

The Lay Ministers

- Multiple persons were involved in different functions during the Mass.
- Lay ministers are reflective of and represent the various demographics of the parish (ages, states of life, etc.)
- Altar servers were well-trained.
- **Readers** were prepared and capable.
- Other ministers (e.g., commentators, ushers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion) were **well-prepared and reverential** in carrying out their duties.
- There was nothing distracting about the way the lay ministers served in their designated roles.

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CELEBRATION

Liturgy of the Word

- The homily was organized, simple, clear, positive
- The homily connected to the readings of the day and/or the liturgical season.
- The homily connected to my everyday life.
- The preaching effected the people in a way that helped them to further experience and dialogue with God.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- There was an announcement (verbal or written) so that those who are not Catholic would know what to do, regarding reception of the Eucharist.
- The majority of the congregation recited the Mass parts together.
- There were periods of silence at appropriate parts of the Liturgy.

Music

- The music ministry (i.e., cantors, choir, instrumentalists) was well-prepared and capable.
- Musical selections were **appropriate** to the celebration.
- Musical selections were known by the congregation or easy to sing.
- The music ministry fostered the participation of the congregation.
- The music enhanced the liturgy and helped people to pray.